

Regional Haze

Did you know..?

- Regional haze is regulated by the EPA
- Regional haze is not at all related to health concerns
- Regulations cost tens of millions of dollars per year for compliance
- Eastern states are also affected by regional haze- it's not just a Western problem!

These two photos are of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma. One of these views is worth an additional **\$282 million** per year in regulatory costs. Can you tell which one?

Oklahoma's Controls



EPA's Controls



The goal of EPA's regional haze program, established decades ago by the Clean Air Act, is to remedy visibility impairment at federal National Parks and Wilderness Areas. Because Regional Haze is an aesthetic regulation, and not a public health standard, Congress emphasized that states, and not EPA, should be the lead decision makers. However, EPA—with some help from its friends at special interest groups and the controversial "Sue and Settle" Rulemaking process—has devised a loophole to usurp state authority and federally impose a strict new set of emissions controls that cost 10 to 20 times more than the technology the states would otherwise have used.

"Sue and Settle Rulemaking" is not just used as a tactic to expand the Endangered Species Act- regional haze regulations have also come under fire in this closed-door bureaucratic rulemaking process. In one particular case in North Dakota, the state was not even notified of the lawsuit until after EPA had settled with the environmental group in a federal court in Oakland, California. North Dakota was then presented with new requirements that were so stringent that several power and cement plants were in danger of shutting down.

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Beyond the fundamental interference with state primacy on regional haze issues, there are two specific problems with EPA's plan:

1. It is usually far more expensive than the states' preferred haze controls, and
2. it offers little to **no noticeable visibility improvements** over the states' preferred haze controls.

EPA's Regional Haze program is all cost, no benefit- and the states and utilities are forced to pay an enormous amount for it.

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Regional haze authority has NOTHING to do with health; it is an issue of visibility, which is a measure of how far one can see and the ability to see textures and colors. But the EPA is abusing the law and forcing exorbitant costs in exchange for improvements that are not even discernible to the naked eye, in an effort to administratively impose President Obama's 'cap and trade' agenda on America.